

S

(Date)

TO: Gen Counsel Mr. Houston

BUILDING: ROOM NO.

REMARKS:

This is Special Agents
report on OLSON case.

Attachment thereto is a
Photostat of Death Certificate.

I prefer ~~to~~ not to let
TSS personnel see the
Agents Report
SE

FROM:

BUILDING ROOM NO. EXTENSION:

FORM NO. 36-8
SEP 1946

16-64268-1 GPO

286

3 December 1953

GENERAL:At New York, New York

On 28 November 1953, at 7:50 a.m., ROBERT V. LASHEROCK was interviewed in Room 488, Statler Hotel, 33rd Street and Seventh Avenue.

Mr. LASHEROCK advised that the SUBJECT was a biochemist and Agency employee assigned to a project at Camp Dietrick, Frederick, Maryland. He stated that a Colonel VINCENT RUWET is Commanding Officer of the SUBJECT's group. LASHEROCK indicated that he has known the SUBJECT for about one year. He stated that the SUBJECT had been suffering from "persecution delusions and guilt feelings." He indicated that these delusions and guilt feelings were not in areas related to the SUBJECT's work. LASHEROCK stated that the SUBJECT had received a medical discharge from the military service because of ulcers and was drawing disability pay. It was the SUBJECT's feeling that he actually had no ulcers and that he therefore believed that he was cheating the government. In this connection, LASHEROCK stated that the SUBJECT would listen to no reasonable solution to his problem. He stated that Colonel RUWET had become aware of SUBJECT's condition and suggested that something be done about it. As a result, on 24 November 1953, Colonel RUWET, LASHEROCK and the SUBJECT came to New York to consult with Dr. HAROLD A. ABRAMSON who has offices at 133 East 58th Street, New York City, and who resides at 47 New Street, Cold Springs Harbor, Long Island, New York. The three consulted with Dr. ABRAMSON on 24 and 25 November 1953 and on the night of 25 November all three went to the Hotel Statler with the intention of departing for Washington, D.C., at about 7:30 a.m., 26 November. At about 5:30 a.m., Colonel RUWET and LASHEROCK arose and were unable to find the SUBJECT. They proceeded to the lobby of the hotel and found SUBJECT there. The SUBJECT told them that he had been "wandering around for a while."

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He also told them that he had torn up what paper money he had and various papers in his wallet. He also indicated that he then threw the wallet away. He was unable to indicate where he had discarded the above articles. Colonel RUWET, Mr. LASHEROCK and the SUBJECT returned to Washington, D.C., on the morning of the 26th. The SUBJECT's condition was such that it was considered advisable that they return to New York immediately for further consultation with Dr. AERANSON. Colonel RUWET remained in Washington and LASHEROCK and the SUBJECT returned to New York, arriving at La Guardia Airport at about 2:00 p.m. They proceeded by taxi to Dr. AERANSON's residence, 117 New Street, Huntington, Long Island, arriving there at about 11:00 p.m. After about a one-hour consultation, LASHEROCK and the SUBJECT went to the Anchorage Guest House at Cold Spring Harbor where they remained overnight. At about 8:15 a.m. on 27 November 1953, Dr. AERANSON met LASHEROCK and the SUBJECT at the Anchorage Guest House and drove them to Dr. AERANSON's New York office at 133 East 58th Street. There was a further conference in which all three participated and it was Dr. AERANSON's suggestion that the SUBJECT go to a hospital for treatment. LASHEROCK stated that SUBJECT indicated that this was agreeable to him. Dr. AERANSON then contacted the Chestnut Lodge at Rockville, Maryland, and made arrangements for the SUBJECT, accompanied by LASHEROCK, to be there at noon on 28 November 1953. The Chestnut Lodge was decided upon after telephonic discussion between Dr. AERANSON and Dr. GOTTLIEB. LASHEROCK identified Dr. GOTTLIEB as Dr. SID GOTTLIEB, his (LASHEROCK's) supervisor. After the conference and on the afternoon of 27 November 1953, LASHEROCK and the SUBJECT returned to the Hotel Statler and checked in. They watched television for a while and then went to the hotel cocktail lounge where each had two martinis. They later had dinner in the hotel's main dining room. LASHEROCK stated that no other alcoholic beverages were consumed by either of them. LASHEROCK stated that at this time, the SUBJECT appeared cheerful and in a considerably better mood. Shortly before 10:00 p.m., the SUBJECT telephoned his wife. He stated that the SUBJECT appeared reluctant to discuss his condition with his wife. LASHEROCK added that the SUBJECT's wife had had psychiatric care early this year. At about 10:00 p.m., the SUBJECT and LASHEROCK returned to their room. They had Room #1018 which contained twin beds. LASHEROCK stated that shortly after 10:00 p.m. he called Colonel RUWET who agreed to meet them at the plane arrival at Washington at about 9:30 a.m., 28 November 1953. LASHEROCK and the SUBJECT watched television in their room until about 11:00 p.m.

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LASHEROCK stated that the SUBJECT remarked that he felt more relaxed than he had for a long time. Both then went to bed and LASHEROCK fell asleep. LASHEROCK stated that recalling that the SUBJECT had "disappeared" the day before, he, LASHEROCK, took the bed nearest the door. LASHEROCK stated that he was unable to fix the time definitely but that about 2:30 a.m. he heard a loud crash of glass. He said that the SUBJECT had jumped through the window shade and the glass and landed on the sidewalk of Seventh Avenue, across the street from Pennsylvania Station. He repeated that his estimate of the time was not accurate and that "that time may be way off." He stated that he immediately, and before reporting to anyone else, telephonically contacted his superior, Dr. GUTTLER, at his home, telephone VERNIA (Virginia) 1544, and told him what had happened. He then reported the incident to the hotel telephone operator. LASHEROCK said that immediately afterward he called Dr. ABRAMSON, who "wanted to be kept out of the thing completely." Shortly afterward, some uniformed police officers and hotel employees came to his room. LASHEROCK stated that he did not obtain their names. He told the police at that time that he did not know why the SUBJECT had jumped and indicated to them that he knew the SUBJECT suffered from ulcers. The uniformed police made a search of the room and found no papers belonging to the SUBJECT, with one exception. LASHEROCK said that this was a letter to the SUBJECT from the Veterans Administration concerning a lapsed insurance policy. This was in LASHEROCK's suitcase. He explained that on Thursday night, the 26th, the SUBJECT had thrown the letter into a waste paper basket and LASHEROCK had retrieved it. While the police were in the room, Dr. ABRAMSON called back and indicated that he had changed his mind about wanting to be "left out completely," and would assist. LASHEROCK stated that no one exhibited any curiosity about this call. He stated that he observed that during the first call to Dr. ABRAMSON the doctor's voice was loud and clear. During the second call, he could not hear the doctor very well and speculated on the possibility of a tapped wire. Following a search of the room by the police, LASHEROCK was requested to go to the police station house at 138 West 30th Street to identify the body. At the station house, he was interviewed by Detectives WARD and MULLEN of the 11th Detective Squad. The detective asked him to turn out his pockets. LASHEROCK stated that among his papers there were airline tickets for the trips that he and the SUBJECT had taken within the past few days and a receipt on plain white paper for \$115.00 dated 25 November 1953 and signed by JOSE MUKHOLLAND. The receipt indicated "Advance for Travel to Chicago." There was also a post card with Colonel RUWET's address appearing as follows: "Vince Ruwet, 100th Rosemont Avenue, phone Monument 3-3469." LASHEROCK said that his papers included some hotel bills and also a paper with the

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address of the Chestnut Lodge in Rockville, Maryland. This latter paper was retained by Detectives WARD and MULLEN. Among LASHEROCK's papers examined by the detectives, there was one which contained Dr. ABRAMSON's office and home addresses and telephone numbers.

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LASHEROCK stated that this information was copied by Detectives WARD and MULLEN and they asked him who G.W., M.H. and J.M. were. He indicated that he preferred not to identify them because of security reasons and the matter was pressed no further by the detectives. LASHEROCK identified G.W. to the reporting agent as another government official. He said that M.H.

LASHEROCK identified J.M. as

During the interview by the detectives, LASHEROCK stated that he told them he was employed by the Department of Defense and exhibited his AGO card for identification. He said that the police requested no details concerning his superior or office location and that he volunteered none. He gave the detectives his California home address, 1115 Montrose, South Pasadena, which is where his parents reside, and his Washington, D.C., address, Apt. 109, 1833 New Hampshire N.W. LASHEROCK stated that he told the detectives that the SUBJECT was employed at Camp Dietrick, Frederick, Maryland, that Colonel VINCENT RUWET was the person there to be notified and that the SUBJECT came to New York with the knowledge of Colonel RUWET and SUBJECT's wife. LASHEROCK stated that he gave no details of SUBJECT's employment at Camp Dietrick. He indicated to the police that he, LASHEROCK, was stationed in Washington, D.C. LASHEROCK stated that the detectives indicated that he had been somewhat uncooperative when questioned by the police in his room at the hotel. LASHEROCK said that he explained to the detectives that because of the nature of SUBJECT's illness he

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was reluctant to discuss it before so many people. He indicated to the detectives that he came to New York with the SUBJECT to see Dr. ABRAMSON and that the SUBJECT was seeing Dr. ABRAMSON because of mental illness. LASHEROCK told the detectives that he was to accompany the SUBJECT to Chestnut Lodge at Rockville, Maryland. LASHEROCK stated that the detectives then examined his wallet. The wallet contained his AGO pass, #495652, and an Army Chemical Center pass, #C750. The wallet also contained a small slip of paper with about thirty unrelated letters of the alphabet. LASHEROCK explained to the reporting agent that this was a coded safe combination. He stated that the police passed right over these papers and did not copy them. The wallet also contained Agency pass #B-244 with Serial #C1158321829. This pass indicated "If found return to Box 1925, Washington, D.C." This pass was not questioned by the detectives and not identified or explained by LASHEROCK. He indicated also that he advised the Police Department that he, LASHEROCK, shared his apartment in Washington, D.C., with EDWIN SPOCKILL. At the conclusion of the interview by the detectives, all papers were returned to LASHEROCK and they assured him that there would be no publicity emanating from the Police Department regarding the incident. They requested that between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon on 28 November 1953, LASHEROCK identify SUBJECT's body at the Morgue, Bellevue Hospital, 29th Street and First Avenue, New York City. They further indicated that there would not be any further need to question him.

The interview was concluded at about 9:30 a.m. and reporting agent advised LASHEROCK that he would contact him at the Statler Hotel when LASHEROCK returned from the Bellevue Morgue.

At about 12:30 p.m., reporting agent and LASHEROCK met at the Hotel Statler. LASHEROCK advised that he had made the official identification of SUBJECT's body and that funeral arrangements would be made by Colonel RUMET or the SUBJECT's wife. Reporting agent remained with LASHEROCK until 5:00 p.m. LASHEROCK made a number of phone calls during the afternoon and other than exhibiting fatigue, appeared completely composed. He advised that pursuant to instructions received from Dr. GOTTLEB he was to meet with Dr. ABRAMSON at 9:15 p.m. on the 28th to obtain a report from Dr. ABRAMSON which he was to take to Washington.

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At 5:00 p.m., Agent WALTER P.T., Jr., met reporting agent and ROBERT LASHEROCK at Pennsylvania Station at New York City. Pursuant to instructions, Agent WALTER P.T. accompanied LASHEROCK throughout the evening and reporting agent departed. LASHEROCK indicated that he would like to take a walk and go to a movie until his 9:15 p.m. appointment. After seeing "Cease Fire" at the Criterion (41st Street and Broadway) and dinner at Mc Ginis's Restaurant (16th Street and Broadway), LASHEROCK and Agent WALTER P.T. walked to 133 East 158th Street, New York, N. Y., arriving there at about 9:15 p.m. Upon arriving there, they proceeded to Room 310. LASHEROCK indicated that he preferred to have the agent wait in the reception room while he spoke to Dr. ABRAMSON. LASHEROCK introduced the agent to Dr. ABRAMSON without the use of the agent's name and indicated that he was a friend accompanying him in an advisory capacity. While remaining in the outer office, Agent WALTER P.T. overheard a portion of the conversation between LASHEROCK and Dr. ABRAMSON. This conversation is summarized as follows:

Upon closing the door, Dr. ABRAMSON and LASHEROCK started a discussion relating to security. Dr. ABRAMSON was heard to comment to LASHEROCK that he was worried about him. LASHEROCK then stated that he thought it would be best if he dictated to Dr. ABRAMSON. Prior to his dictation, they listened to portions of a conversation which had been recorded. Although names were not mentioned, it is believed that the recording represented an interview between a physician or psychiatrist and the SUBJECT. Following this, LASHEROCK started to dictate to Dr. ABRAMSON concerning the SUBJECT. This related to LASHEROCK's observations of SUBJECT's behaviour prior to SUBJECT's demise. LASHEROCK told Dr. ABRAMSON that SUBJECT had told him that as far back as March 1953 SUBJECT's wife had suggested that SUBJECT see a doctor because of his depressed condition. LASHEROCK further stated that it was his impression that SUBJECT had delusions and was suffering from guilt and persecution complexes. LASHEROCK mentioned that SUBJECT thought he was stealing money from the government. LASHEROCK also indicated to Dr. ABRAMSON that SUBJECT had told him that he thought the agency group was putting benzedrine in his coffee to keep him awake. Toward the close of his dictation, LASHEROCK indicated that he had had dinner at the hotel with the SUBJECT at which time the SUBJECT had said to him, "I haven't felt better for a long time." Several times during LASHEROCK's dictation, the dictation was interrupted and he and Dr. ABRAMSON listened to portions of the tape recording.

Agent WALTER P.T. heard LASHEROCK and Dr. ABRAMSON leave the room closest to the outside office and enter another room. At this point, LASHEROCK and Dr. ABRAMSON were apparently having a drink. Dr. ABRAMSON was heard to remark to LASHEROCK that he was "worried as to whether or not the deal was in jeopardy" and that he thought that the operation was dangerous and that the whole deal should be re-analyzed." LASHEROCK and Dr. ABRAMSON rejoined Agent WALTER P.T. in the outer office at about 10:30 p.m. Dr. ABRAMSON accompanied LASHEROCK and the agent to the street. On the way down, Dr. ABRAMSON spoke to LASHEROCK using medical terms which LASHEROCK apparently understood quite well. Agent WALTER P.T. got the impression that LASHEROCK is a doctor or scientist.

Agent WALTER P.T. and LASHEROCK took a taxi from 58th Street and Park Avenue to Pennsylvania Station where LASHEROCK boarded the 12:10 a.m. train for Washington, D.C., at 11:00 p.m.

On 2 December 1953, Agent JOHN D.P. obtained Certificate of Death relating to the SUBJECT from the New York City Department of Health, Bureau of Records and Statistics. This certificate is attached and marked Exhibit A.

On 2 December 1953, Agent JEREMIAH J.N. examined "WHO'S IMPORTANT IN MEDICINE," Second Edition, 1952, at the New York Public Library, 42nd Street and Fifth Avenue. This book contained the following information about Dr. HAROLD ABRAMSON:

"ABRAMSON, Harold Alexander, Physician; born November 27, 1899, New York, N.Y.; son of F. Samuel and M. Rose (Richard) Abramson; educated at Columbia Univ., AB 1920, MD 1923; married Barbara Howland Smith, June 26, 1933; Children - Alexandra Howland, Harold Alexander, Barbara Howland, Howland Wilson. Entered in the practice of Medicine since 1925. National Research Council Fellow, Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for Phys. Chemistry and Electrochemistry, Berlin, 1926-27. Instructor in Medicine, John Hopkins University, 1929-31. Associate in Bacteriology and Immunology, Cornell University, 1931-35. Assistant Professor of Physiology, Columbia University, since 1935. Associate Physician and Chief of Allergy Clinic, Mt. Sinai Hospital. Discovered and developed electrophoretic and ultracentrifugal isolation of molecules causing hay fever; elec. charge of blood cells; electrodermal (sic) skin tests and therapy with pollen extracts; mechanism of allergic skin reactions, nature of ionizing groups of protein surfaces. Initiated (1942) and

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directed penicillin aerosol therapy for lungs for Tech. Div., Chem. War Service, World War II. Assistant Chief and Chief, Defense Materiel. Fellow: N.Y. Academy of Medicine; American College of Allergists (Pres. 1951-52). Members: American Assn. for Advancement of Science; American Academy of Allergy; American Psychosomatic Society; N.Y. Academy of Science; N.Y. Allergy Society (Pres. 1951-52); American Society of Certified Allergists; American Society of Biological Chemists; N.Y. County Medical Society; Society for Experimental Biol. and Med.; Society for Investigative Dermatology; Alpha Omega Alpha; Epsilon Chi; Member, Board of Trustees, Biology Lab., Cold Spring Harbor, L.I. Awarded Meyerhof Prize, Columbia Medical College, 1921; Stevens Triennial Prize, Col. Univ., 1935; Legion of Merit, World War II. Member of Editorial Board: Annals of Allergy; Psychosomatic Medicine; Archives of Allergy and Immunology. Lt.-Col., Med. Corps Res. (inactive). Res: Cold Spring Harbor, N.Y. Off: 133 East 58 St., N.Y. 22, N.Y."

The MEDICAL DIRECTORY OF NEW YORK STATE, Volume XLIV, 1951, published by the Medical Society of the State of New York, 292 Madison Avenue, New York, N. Y., indicates that Dr. ABRAMSON's practice is limited to Immunology and Allergy.

On 2 December 1953, Agent JAMES J. McC. contacted Detectives JAMES WARD and DAVID MULLEN at the 11th Police Precinct, 138 West 30th Street, New York City. Detective WARD made available the complaint report in SUBJECT's case which indicated the date and time as 28 November 1953 at 3:50 a.m. The case number was 125124 and the crime DOA (Death on Arrival). The place of occurrence was noted to be the Hotel Statler, Room 1018A, 33rd Street and Seventh Avenue, and the case was handled by Detective JAMES WARD, 11th Squad.

The details as reported by complainant Patrolman GUASTEFESTE, Shield #11626, described the SUBJECT as "unknown, M-W-42-5'10"-170 lbs.-blue eyes-blond hair-partly bald-wearing white underwear. Registered in hotel under name of FRANK _____ of Route #5, Frederick, Md. Jumped or fell through window in room at place of occurrence and pronounced DOA by Dr. DEMOSMO of St. Vincent's Hospital. Deceased found by Assistant Manager FITZGERALD of Statler Hotel. Body to station house."

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Report of Investigating Officer dated 11/28/53 stated that the investigation was being conducted and that in view of the facts set forth it was requested that the case remain active.

A supplementary complaint report concerning the case indicated that the crime or offense reported was now listed as DCA (Suicide). The status of the case was indicated as Closed MR (with written report).

The report of the investigation dated 30 November 1953 reflected the following:

*SUBJECT-RE: INVESTIGATION CONDUCTED, IDENTITY OF DECEASED, CAUSE OF DEATH AND DISPOSITION OF BODY.

1. Upon being notified of this occurrence, immediately visited place of occurrence, Statler Hotel, where a thorough investigation was conducted. At this time, it was disclosed that the deceased had registered in Rm. 2101&A on November 26, 1953, under the name of FRANK R. _____, Frederick, Md., with another person named ROBERT LASHEROCK, Washington, D.C., Apt. 105, who identified himself as a consultant chemist employed by the War Department, Defense Bureau, Adjutant's General's Office, Washington, D.C., under Serial #C1168321529 also had picture on card with number 3244. LASHEROCK at this time disclosed that the deceased was one FRANK R. _____, Camp Detrick, Frederick, Maryland, a Bacteriologist, employed by the same branch of the government as he (LASHEROCK). He further stated that the deceased with himself and a Colonel VINCENT RUWET, attached to Camp Detrick, Frederick, Md., came to New York City on November 24, 1953, for the purpose of having the deceased examined by a Dr. HAROLD HERMSON, 133 E. 50th St., N.Y.C. (PL 3-8338), as he was suffering from a mental ailment. They remained in N.Y.C. until the morning of November 26, 1953, registered at the Statler Hotel, during which time the deceased was examined by the doctor on two occasions and on the morning of November 26, 1953, LASHEROCK, with the deceased, returned to New York City and registered in the Statler Hotel. They again visited the aforementioned doctor and as a result of this visit the deceased was advised to enter a sanitarium as he was suffering from severe psychosis and illusions. At this time, arrangements were made for the deceased to enter the Chestnut Lodge, Rockville, Md., under the supervision of a Dr. FORT. On the evening of November 27, 1953, the deceased in the company of LASHEROCK had dinner in the Cafe Rouge of the Statler Hotel and returned to their room at approximately 9:30 p.m.

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looked at television for approximately 1 hour and then proceeded to go to sleep. At approximately 3:20 a.m. on November 28, 1953, LASHBROOK stated that he heard a crash of glass which awakened him and upon turning on the light he observed that the deceased was not in his bed and that the window of the room leading out to 7th Avenue was broken. He then called the operator of the hotel and at this time he learned that _____ had jumped out of the window.

"2. The assigned immediately checked on the above facts related by LASHBROOK and they were verified by Dr. HAROLD ABRAMSON and Colonel VINCENT RUMET.

"3. Due to the importance of the positions held by the deceased and LASHBROOK with the U.S. Government, the facts in this case were related to F.B.I. Agent GEORGE DALEN (by telephone).

"4. On November 28, 1953, autopsy performed on body of deceased by Assistant Medical Examiner DI MATO and as a result of same it was disclosed that death resulted from multiple fractures.

"5. On November 28, 1953, body of the deceased claimed by his wife ALICE and delivered by Frank E. Campbell, undertakers, 1076 Madison Ave., under removal #67, for burial. CASE CLOSED."

This report was submitted and signed by Detective JAMES W. WARD, Shield #338, 11th Squad.

Before reviewing the report, Detective DAVID MULLEN, who had reported to duty on the evening shift a little earlier than Detective WARD, engaged in conversation with Agent JAMES J. McC. When MULLEN was contacted and advised that the agent was interested in obtaining the report concerning SUBJECT's case, MULLEN advised that he was Detective WARD's partner on the case. He stated that WARD was responsible for the report and he personally discussed the case and said that ROBERT LASHBROOK, who was with the SUBJECT, had been quite uncooperative and he and Detective WARD had to bring LASHBROOK to the station house before he would answer other questions. Detective MULLEN said that they were first very suspicious that LASHBROOK and the SUBJECT might have been engaged in some homosexual affair and also were mulling over in their minds the possibility that the case was actually a homicide. He further stated that they were considering

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the possibility that SUBJECT and LASHROCK were involved in some committee hearing for they were aware that Sen. Mc Carthy's Committee was in town around this time. He stated that the case of MUGGAN of the State Department came to mind and as a result they called the FBI to see whether or not they knew anything about either LASHROCK or the SUBJECT. About this time, Detective JAMES WARD appeared and he more or less confirmed what Detective MULLEN had said. He advised that LASHROCK was uncooperative and it was "like pulling teeth to get anything out of him." He said that they secured Dr. AERHUSON's name from the hotel operator who apparently had intercepted LASHROCK's call to Dr. AERHUSON and he continued by stating that he could not believe anything could be so secretive that LASHROCK would have been justified in being so uncooperative. He advised that he had been in touch with an F.B.I. agent (whom Detective MULLEN thought was named Mc SHANE) whom he, Detective WARD, did not identify, and who was equally unbelieving and had expressed the opinion that he did not know of any government work so confidential as to justify a lack of cooperation with police officials.

After this discussion, Detective WARD made available report set forth above and when the report was returned to him, in answer to a query as to whether the FBI was still interested in the case he stated that he believed they were doing further checking into the background of LASHROCK.

Detectives WARD and MULLEN advised that the SUBJECT's case had been given little publicity but this was not because the reporters were not interested in the case at the time that it happened, but rather that none of the more important New York newspapers have been published since the incident occurred. They said that reporters had been around the station house trying to get details on the story on the day it happened but advised that after twenty-four hours news stories lose their value.

Detectives WARD and MULLEN were fully cooperative and advised that they would be willing to give further help if it were desired.